

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 SAM-01 /081 W

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 494

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 2642

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PORG EG US

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: DEPT'S ORGANIZATIN, ACTIVITIES AND
OBJECTIVES: REQUEST FOR MULTILATERAL INFORMATION ON HOST
GOVERNMENT - EGYPT

REF: STATE 37591

1. FOLLOWING IS PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE CONTAINED
REFTEL (PARAGRAPHS CORRESPOND TO THOSE IN PARA 7):

2. (A) PRINCIPAL PREOCCUPATION OF TOP EGYPTIAN POLICYMAKERS
IS, OF COURSE, ARAB-ISAELI PROBLEM. IT USES MULTILATERAL FORUMS) UN

,
OAU, ARAB LEAGUE, ETC) TO FURTHER ITS OBJECTIVES THIS ISSUE. BOTH
IN CONNECTION WITH THIS MAJOR INTEREST AND WITH THE FURTHER INTEREST
OF GENERALLY MAINTAINING LEADING AND INFLUENTIAL ROLE IN ARAB
WORLD, AMONG AFRICAN STATES (GROUP TO WHICH EGYPT ALSO
BELONGS) AND IN NON-ALIGNED COUNCILS AND CONFERENCES, WHERE
NASSER ESTABLISHED LEADING ROLE FOR EGYPT, GOE GIVES MAJOR
IMPORTANCE TO MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY. EGYPT'S MAJOR OBJECTIVES
IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS DURING 1976 ARE LIKELY TO BE (1) TO POSE
AS THE CHAMPION OF THE PALESTINIANS AND TO ENHANCE STATUS OF
PLO IN ALL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS; (2) TO COMPETE FOR
LEADERSHIP OF ARAB BLOC AND DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST PROPAGANDA
ATTACKS FROM RADICAL ARABS; (3) TO EXERT INFLUENCE IN COUNCILS
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OF OAU; AND (4) TO REFURBISH EGYPT'S IMAGE AS A NONALIGNED

LEADER. IN SEEKING TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES GOE WILL SEEK INFLUENTIAL AND PRESTIGIOUS POSITION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AS APPROPRIATE. FOR EXAMPLE, IT WELCOMED ITS INCLUSION IN CIEC, SUPPORTED BY USG, AS OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY FRONT-LINE ROLE IN THIS IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE.

3. (B) IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THIS LEADING ROLE IN ARAB BLOC, WHICH IS BEING INCREASINGLY UNDERMINED BY SYRIA AND OTHER RADICAL ARAB STATES SINCE SINAI II, GOE HAS BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO TAKE CONTROVERSIAL POSITIONS BOTH ON ARAB AND OUTSIDE ISSUES, WHICH WOULD DEMONSTRATE CURRENT FRAGILITY OF EGYPTIAN POSITION. BECAUSE OF ITS DEPENDENCE ON ARAB FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT ON CRUCIAL ISSUES, EGYPT IS THUS MORE LIKELY TO BE INFLUENCED BY ARAB OPINION THAN INFLUENCE IT, UNLESS IT IS A MATTER CRITICAL TO SUPPORT OF ITS OWN POLICY. THE SAME FEAR OF ISOLATION PREVAILS IN GOE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ISSUES OUTSIDE ARAB WORLD ESPOUSED BY NONALIGNED COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE WITH RADICAL TENDENCIES. GOE'S FAVORABLE RESPONSE TO USG DEMARCHES IN CASE OF EFFORT TO REJECT CREDENTIAL OF INCUMBENT CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT IN 29TH UNGA EARNED IT SHARP CRITICISM FROM SEVERAL ARAB STATES AS WELL AS NONALIGNED ONES. GOE ANTI-MPLA STANCE IN RECENT OAU DEBATE ON ANGOLA ALSO PROBABLY DIMINISHED ITS CREDIT WITH NUMBER OF AFRICAN STATES. ON BASIS OF THESE EXPERIENCES, IT IS NATURAL FOR GOE TO BE A LITTLE GUN-SHY WHEN ASKED TO SUPPORT US POSITIONS CONTRARY TO GENERALLY ACCEPTED NONALIGNED STANDS.

4. (C) EXCEPT FOR ISSUES IN WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER HAS A DIRECT AND PERSONAL INTEREST, ESPECIALLY THOSE RELATING TO ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM IN GENERAL AND PLO QUESTION IN PARTICULAR, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DOES NOT NORMALLY EXERCISE CLOSE CONTROL OVER ITS DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL FORUMS. SINCE BOTH FONMIN AND MIN OF STATE FOR FONAFFAIRS HAVE HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN UN, THEY OFTEN TEND TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC TACTICAL GUIDANCE TO UN REP ON ABOVE ISSUES. OTHERWISE, HEAD OF EGYPTIAN DELEGATIONS ARE OFTEN MFA EXPERTS IN THEIR FIELDS, E.G. LAW OF SEA, AND ARE ALLOWED FLEXIBILITY WITHIN RANGE OF GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS WHICH THEY MAY HAVE PREPARED THEMSELVES. ON MANY ISSUES NOT OF DIRECT CONCERN TO GOE, EG SOMOA, GUAM, ETC, EGYPTPERMREP IS TOLD TO FOLLOW ARAB CAUCUS AT UN. CONSEQUENTLY, CONFIDENTIAL

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THEIR REPORTING IS FREQUENTLY NEITHER TIMELY NOR SO DETAILED AS TO PERMIT MFA TO REMAIN ON TOP OF ISSUE. HOWEVER, IF REPRESENTATIONS ARE MADE AT HIGH LEVEL, MFA, IT IT AGREES, DOES ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS PROMPTLY, GENERALLY INCLUDING SUGGESTIONS FOR CLOSE CONSULTATIONS WITH USDEL.

5. (D) EGYPT'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES AND HEADS OF DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DO NOT HAVE INDEPENDENT

POWER. THEY ARE PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMATS WHO ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS, INCLUDING LEADING OR FOLLOWING ARAB CAUCUS.

6. (E) EGYPT CONSIDERS ITS BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE US AS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE PURSUIT OF ITS PRINCIPAL FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVE; PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE ARAB/ISRELI CONFLICT. AT SAME TIME, GOE BELIEVES ITS "SPECIAL" RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US HAS ALSO SERVED OUR INTERESTS THROUGHOUT THE MIDDLE EAST, STRATEGICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY. IT DOES NOT FEEL THAT OUR MUTUAL ASSOCIATION IN PEACE PROCESS IN ME CARRIES WITH IT ANY DIPLOMATIC OBLIGATIONS WITH RESPECT TO ISSUES IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS. IN FACT, EGYPTIANS OFTEN CONSIDER MULTILATERAL FORUMS AS THE SAFEST PLACE TO DEMONSTRATE EGYPTIAN INDEPENDENCE VIS-A-VIS US POLICY AND TO DISAPPROVE RADICAL ARAB ALLEGATIONS THAT EGYPT HAS BECOME A TOOL OF US, ESPECIALLY AFTER RADICAL ARAB ATTACKS ON GOE FOR CONCLUDING SINAI II. EGYPTIANS DO NOT CONSIDER THAT US WOULD ENDANGER ITS BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP AND MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS OVER DIFFERENCES IN UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WHERE OUR RESPECTIVE INTERSTS DIVERGE. WHERE GOE FEELS THEY DO COINCIDE SUCH AS IN UNSC AND UNGA CONSIDERATION OF ME ISSUES, PRESIDENT AND FONMIN HAVE PRESSED USG TO ACCEPT EGYPTIAN POSITION, WHICH THEY TRY TO MODIFY TO EXTENT POLITICALLY POSSIBLE TO ATTRACT OUR SUPPORT. GENERALLY, HOWEVER, USG BECAUSE OF OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, HAS NOT BEEN ABLE T COMPLY. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT US EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT EGYPTIAN COOPERATION WOULD HAVE REASONABLE POSSIBLITY OF SUCCESS IF (1) WE TAKE EGYPTIANS INTO OUR CONFIDENCE IN TERMS OF STRATEGY AND PURPOSE; (2) CONTINUE TO BE HIGHLY SELECTIVE ON ISSUES OF REAL IMPORTANCE TO THE US ON WHICH WE SEEK EGYPTIAN SUPPORT; AND (3) WE WERE PROVIDED WITH MORE TIMELY INFORMATION IN THIS RESPCT BY DEPARTMENT. WE WERE PLEASED TO NOTE THAT ALL OF
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THESE POINTS ARE PART OF THE STRATEGY OUTLINED IN STATE 037592.
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